

Know the Milestones: Monitoring Your Child's Development

A YoungStar Guide for Families

Taking their first steps. Saying their first words. Learning how to share. These are all examples of developmental milestones—sure signs that your child is growing up a little more every day.

Children don't always grow out of a developmental delay and some delays could be a sign of more serious health concern.

Paying close attention to the way your child plays, learns, talks and moves—and talking to your pediatrician about the things you notice—is the best way to make sure your child reaches his or her full potential.

For additional information, visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci/child-development>

Start with a Checkup

By the time children are three years old, their brains are nearly 90% fully developed. That's why recognizing a possible developmental delay early is so important. The first step you can take is to schedule regular wellness checkups with your pediatrician. A doctor can help you identify the milestones that matter for your child based on his or her age. It's also your chance to ask questions and get the support and guidance every family needs.

Use a Checklist

Before you can track your child's development, you have to know what to look for. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn The Signs. Act Early." program can help. Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html> to learn the important milestones for children 2 months to 5 years old. You can even download the checklists you need for free.

A milestones checklist can help make talking with your child's doctors and child care providers easier. Here's how:

- 1) Download the milestones checklist for your child's age (<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/freematerials.html>). Consider sharing copies with family members, your child care provider, and others who care of your child.
- 2) Watch how your child plays, learns, talks and moves using the checklist as your guide.
- 3) On the checklist, mark the milestones your child has reached. Circle the ones your child is still working on.
- 4) Write down any questions you have.
- 5) Bring the checklist with you the next time you meet with your pediatrician or child care provider and talk to them about what you have observed.

You're now prepared to have a meaningful and helpful conversation about your child's growth and needs.

1-888-713-5437 (Toll-free) 711 (TTY)
youngstar.wi.gov



Using YoungStar Is Easy

Visit youngstar.wi.gov to compare child care providers and find helpful parenting advice.

Look for the **YoungStar rating window sticker or certificate** when you're interviewing providers.

Call **1-888-713-KIDS (5437)** to get personalized help from a local child care resource and referral specialist.

Want to Learn More?

At youngstar.wi.gov, parents can watch videos, download articles and find useful information on early childhood education, nutrition and more. You can even discover activities that encourage healthy brain development.

What You Can Do

To Help Your Child Grow

Language, logic, fine motor skills, even happiness, they all start with a healthy and active brain. And that starts with you. Playing, talking and reading with your child can make a big difference. Add a healthy diet and a safe, nurturing environment—at home and away from home—and you've set the stage for lifelong success. Visit youngstar.wi.gov to learn more.

If You're Concerned

Children develop at their own pace; some early, some late. But you know your child best. If you notice that your child's progress seems to have slowed, if there is a loss of skills or you sense something's wrong with the way your child plays, learns, moves or communicates: don't wait. Talk to your pediatrician right away.



The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please call the Division of Early Care and Education at 608-422-6002. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled can use the free Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711 to contact the department.